

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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O R 220855Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3313

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC HONOLULU IMMEDIATE

USSAG NKP THAILAND IMMEDIATE

USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

S E C R E T SAIGON 3313

EXDIS-MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

NOFORN

WARNING--SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS

INVOLVED/NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2 DECLASSIFICATION DATE IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE

TAGS: MOPS, VS

SUBJECT: HIGHLIGHTS OF NVA OFFENSIVE--SUMMARY FOR PERIOD ENDING
NOON MARCH 22

1. GENERAL

THERE HAVE BEEN SOME SETBACKS FOR THE GVN IN MR-1, AS THREE STRATEGIC HILLS WERE LOST TO COMMUNIST FORCES MARCH 21. ROUTE 1 BETWEEN HUE AND DANANG REMAINS OPEN. IN MR-2, THE MAIN ACTIVITY IS THE REFUGEE CONVOY. THERE ARE FIVE INTERDICTIONS BETWEEN THE CONVOY'S LEAD ELEMENTS AND THE COAST, AND FOUR RF BNS. HAVE BEEN DISPATCHED TO CLEAR THEM. IN MR-3 GVN FORCES RETOOK AN OUTPOST ALONG ROUTE 26 IN TAY NINH. THE OTHER SIGNIFICANT ACTION INVOLVED A FULL-SCALE ATTACK BY NVA FORCES NE OF ROUTE 26 WHICH HAS SINCE BEEN BROKEN OFF. THE END OF THE MID-MONTH HIGHPOINT IN

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MR-4 HAS COME WITH ONLY MARGINAL GAINS FOR NVA FORCES. TWO NVA

REGTS. NEAR CAN THO HAVE WITHDRAWN WITHOUT INITIATING ACTION.

2. MR-1:

THE SITUATION IN MR-1 DETERIORATED SOMEWHAT YESTERDAY AS NVA FORCES CAPTURED THREE STRATEGIC HIGHPOINTS BETWEEN HUE AND DANANG. HILLS 224, 500, AND BON MOUNTAIN WERE ALL IN COMMUNIST HANDS AS OF 1730 HOURS MARCH 21. ROUTE 1 BETWEEN THE TWO CITIES REMAINS OPEN. ACTIVITY CONTINUES IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THUA THIEN, AND THERE HAS BEEN SOME LIGHT ACTIVITY AROUND TAM KY. THE PROVINCE CHIEF OF THUA THIEN ESTIMATES THAT APPROXIMATELY 40PERCENT OF THE RESIDENTS HAVE FLED THE PROVINCE.

3. MR-2:

SOME 300 OF THE LEAD VEHICLES IN THE KONTUM/PLEIKU CONVOY HAVE NOW CROSSED THE SONG BA RIVER. HOWEVER, THERE ARE FIVE INTERDICTIONS ON THE ROAD THE COLUMN MUST TRAVEL BETWEEN THE RIVER AND TUY HOA. THE PHU YEN PROVINCE CHIEF HAS DETAILED FIVE RF BNS. TO CLEAR THESE BLOCKS. THERE HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS CASUALTIES INFLICTED ON THE COLUMN IN PHU BON, BUT SO FAR CASUALTIES HAVE BEEN LIGHT IN PHU YEN. THE 23RD DIVISION NO LONGER EXISTS AS AN EFFECTIVE FIGHTING UNIT ACCORDING TO THE MR-2 DEPUTY COMMANDER, AND HE ESTIMATES THAT IT WILL NOT BE COMBAT-READY FOR AT LEAST A YEAR. THERE IS FIGHTING IN KHANH HOA, AND ACTION HAS PICKED UP AROUND QUI NHON CITY.

4. MR-3:

A FULL-SCALE ATTACK DEVELOPED THE EVENING OF MARCH 21-22 IN TAY NINH NORTHEAST OF KHIEM HANH DISTRICT TOWN AGAINST ELEMENTS OF THE 7TH ARVN REGT, AND RF UNITS GUARDING THE JUNCTION OF ROUTES 26 AND 39. THIS ZONE HAS NOW BEEN STABILIZED. AN NVA ATTACK EARLY MARCH 22 FORCES RF ELEMENTS TO BE WITHDRAWN FROM MO CONG OUTPOST NORTH OF TAY NINH, AFTER INFLICTING HEAVY CASUALTIES ON THE ATTACKERS. THERE WAS A SUCCESSFUL GVN OPERATION TO RETAKE CAU KHOL OUTPOST ON ROUTE 26 SOUTHEAST OF TAY NINH. THE OUTPOST, CAPTURED BY NVA FORCES SEVERAL DAYS AGO, WAS RETAKEN BY THE 46TH REGT. FOLLOWING ITS SUCCESSFUL SWEEP IN THE AREA MARCH 20.

5. MR-4:

AFTER 10 DAYS OF THE USUAL MID-MONTH HIGHPOINT IN THE DELTA, NVA FORCES HAVE HAD ONLY MARGINAL EFFECT ON THE MR-4 SECURITY SITUATION. DESPITE ITS CAPTURE OF STRATEGIC BA THANG MINH OUTPOST IN

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KIEN TUONG, THE 5TH NVA DIVISION HAS MADE NO MOVE TO INCREASE ITS GAINS. THE 18B AND 95A NVA REGTS., WHICH WERE LOCATED NEAR THE CAN THO OUTER DEFENSE PERIMETER, HAVE WITHDRAWN FROM THESE POSITIONS. ACTIVITY IN THE LAST 24 HOURS HAS DECLINED SOMEWHAT, AND THE INTENSITY OF CONTACTS REMAINS MODERATE TO LOW. ALL MR-4 STAFF OFFICERS REMAIN CONFIDENT IN THEIR ABILITY TO MEET ANY THREAT THE NVA FORCES MAY POSE IN THE DELTA.

6. ICCS

ICCS TEAMS ARE CONSIDERING RETURNING TO THE RECENTLY ABANDONED
TEAMSITE AT TAM KY, FOLLOWING REDEPLOYMENT OF AN ARVN ARTILLERY
UNIT WHICH HAD BEEN LOCATED NEARBY. ACCORDING TO AN UNOFFICIAL
REPORT, THE INDONESIANS ARE PLANNING TO REMOVE 30 OF THEIR DELEGATION
MEMBERS TO JAKARTA MARCH 26.

WARNING NOTICE: SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS
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